DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 136 838 IR 004 685

TITLE Materials Selection Policies For School Media Centers--Aids for Writing.
INSTITUTION Ohio State Association of School Librarians, Columbus.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 21p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bibliographies; *Guidelines; *Library Materials; *Library Material Selection; Library Planning; Objectives; Policy; *School Libraries

ABSTRACT

This pamphlet prepared by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the Ohio Association of Librarians presents guidelines for writing policies for materials selection in school libraries. A School Library Bill of Rights and a Bibliography of materials to aid in the writing of a materials selection policy are included. Sample policies from the Edison local library and the Cleveland Heights--University Heights City School District serve as examples of existing policy statements. (AP)

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Materials Selection Policies for School Media Centers----Aids for Writing

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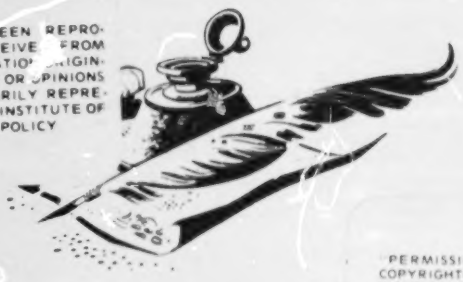

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Prepared by

The Intellectual Freedom Committee

of

Ohio Association of School Librarians
1975

Monograph Series No. 1

affiliate of

Ohio Education Association
225 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio

LI 000 703

Ohio Association of School Librarians
Materials selection policies for school media centers—aids for writing. (Monograph Series No. 1).

Bibliography: p. 4

1. Book Selection 2. Libraries—Censorship I. Intellectual Freedom Committee, OASL. II. Title III. Series: Ohio Association of School Librarians. Monograph no. 1

Z675.S3 027.8

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Printed by WARD Artcraft Printing Co.
Toledo, Ohio, U.S.A.

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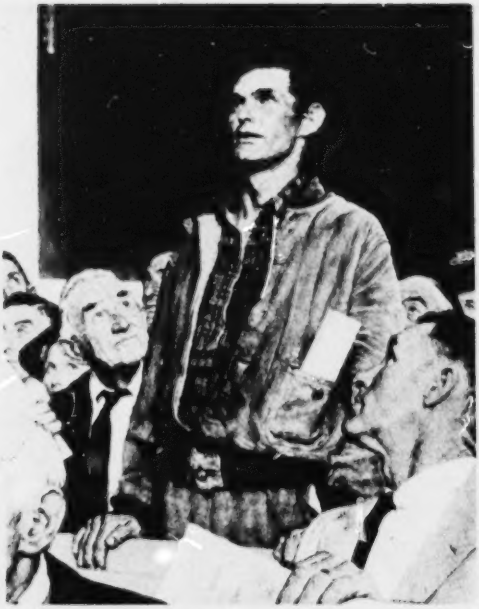


FREEDOM OF SPEECH. by Norman Rockwell, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1943. This is one of the four freedoms painted by Rockwell during World War II. The others are: FREEDOM FROM FEAR; FREEDOM OF WORSHIP; FREEDOM FROM WANT.

THE RIGHT TO KNOW. partial of oil painting by Norman Rockwell for LOOK Magazine, August 20, 1968.

SCHOOL LIBRARY BILL

OF RIGHTS

FOR SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA

CENTER PROGRAMS

Approved by American Association of School Librarians Board of Directors,
Atlantic City, 1969

The American Association of School Librarians reaffirms its belief in the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association. Media personnel are concerned with generating understanding of American freedoms through the development of informed and responsible citizens. To this end the American Association of School Librarians asserts that the responsibility of the school library media center is:

To provide a comprehensive collection of instructional materials selected in compliance with basic written selection principles, and to provide maximum accessibility to these materials.

To provide materials that will support the curriculum, taking into consideration the individual's needs and the varied interests, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds, and maturity levels of the students served.

To provide materials for teachers and students that will encourage growth in knowledge, and that will develop literary, cultural and aesthetic appreciation, and ethical standards.

To provide materials which reflect the ideas and beliefs of religious, social, political, historical, and ethnic groups and their contribution to the American and world heritage and culture, thereby enabling students to develop an intellectual integrity in forming judgments.

To provide a written statement approved by the local Boards of Education, of the procedures for meeting the challenge of censorship of materials in school library media centers.

To provide qualified professional personnel to serve teachers and students.

Guidelines For Writing A
Materials Selection Policy

Prepared by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of OASL, 1975

A materials selection policy should contain:

I. Philosophy, goals and objective
   - A. Of the school district. The selection policy and all criteria should conform to the school system's philosophy.
   - B. Educational objectives of the media center

II. Statement concerning selection personnel
   - A. Who should be included
   - B. What their responsibilities are
   - C. Emphasize that final selection rests with media center professionals (librarians and/or media specialists)

III. Criteria for selection
   - A. Curricula
   - B. Literary quality
   - C. Objectivity
   - D. Representative of many viewpoints
   - E. Various maturity and ability levels considered
   - F. Needs of school
   - G. Accuracy and scope of coverage
   - H. Other

IV. Inclusion of selection aids
   - A. Lists of reviewing sources
   - B. Staff and students suggestions
   - C. Sources which should not be used

V. Characteristics of collection
   - A. Scope
   - B. Size
   - C. Reasons for special emphasis
   - D. Statement on development

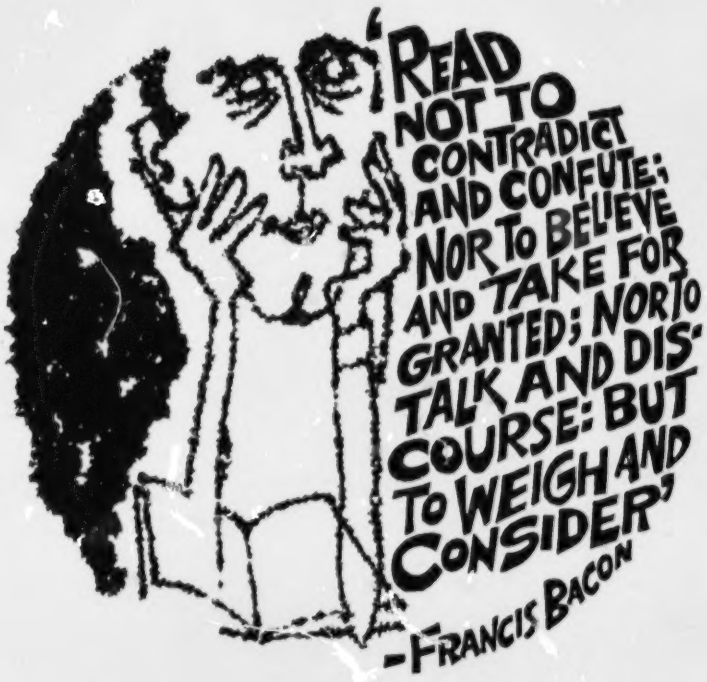
VI. Policies on maintenance of collection
   - A. Weeding
   - B. Replacing
   - C. Binding
   - D. Duplication and others

VII. Policies on controversial materials

VIII. Special Areas

A. Gifts
B. Sponsored materials
C. Expensive materials
D. Ephemeral materials
E. Jobbers and salesmen
F. Locked case, special requests etc.

IX. Procedure for handling challenged materials


'READ NOT TO CONTRADICT AND CONFUTE; NOR TO BELIEVE AND TAKE FOR GRANTED; NOR TO TALK AND DISCOURSE: BUT TO WEIGH AND CONSIDER'
-FRANCIS BACON

Bibliography of Materials to Aid In
The Writing of a Material Selection Policy

Prepared by The Intellectual Freedom Committee of OASL, 1975

SELECTION MATERIALS FOR SCHOOL MEDIA CENTERS; GUIDELINES AND SELECTION SOURCES TO INSURE QUALITY COLLECTIONS. American Association of School Librarians. 1971. ALA, Chicago.

TITLE II, ESEA, MEDIA SELECTION POLICY, GUIDELINES FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT. State of Ohio, Department of Education. 1971. Columbus, Ohio.

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ADMINISTERING EDUCATIONAL MEDIA, INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND LIBRARY SERVICES. James W. Brown, Kenneth D. Norber, Sara K. Srygley. 1972. McGraw-Hill.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER PROBLEMS, Louis Coburn. 1973. Oceania, New York. (appendix– B-Library Bill of Rights; C-Free access to library for minors; G-Sample policy statements (Policies for selection of instructional materials).

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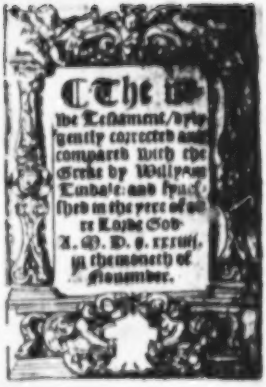
CREATING A SCHOOL MEDIA PROGRAM; John T. Gillespie and Dian Spirt. 1973. R. R. Bowker.

SPOTLIGHT: MEDIA SOLUTION HANDBOOK FOR MEDIA SPECIALIST. Compiled by the Audio Visual Committee, 1972-73 of Ohio Association of School Librarians, Mary K. Biagini, Editor. Vol. II, Fall, 1973. OASL.

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS BULLETIN, October, 1973. P. 2-11.

Anyone not having access to the above items and interested in obtaining them on loan may contact:

Mrs. Lillian Brinnon, Chairman
Intellectual Freedom Committee, OASL
2196 Grandview Avenue
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106



William Tyndale's first English translation of the Bible in 1526 had to be smuggled into England. For making it possible for the common person to read the bible, Tyndale was condemned as a heretic and publicly burned in 1536.

"A popular Government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives."

James Madison
August 4, 1822

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A WRITER, IS HE? George Grosz. Germany, 1936. Not only was book burning prevalant in Nazi Germany, book writers were persecuted as well.

THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS: DO NOT MEDDLE WITH IT. France, 1834. King Charles X's attempted repression of the French Press lead to the fall of the Bourbon Kings and fueled the fire of the revolution of 1848.

SAMPLE POLICY NO. 1

EDISON LOCAL LIBRARY
Selection Of Materials

While the legal responsibility for the purchase of all instructional materials is vested in the Edison Board of Education, the final responsibility for the selection of library materials is delegated to the school librarian who identifies, orders and organizes materials which will implement, enrich and support the educational program of the school and which will meet the needs, interests, goals, concerns and abilities of the individual students.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF PRINT AND NON-PRINT MATERIALS

1. educational significance
2. need and value to the collection
3. reputation and significance of author and producer
4. clarity, adequacy and scope of text of audio-visual presentation
5. validity, accuracy, objectivity, up-to-dateness, and appropriateness of text or audio-visual presentation
6. organization and presentation of contents
7. high degree of readability and/or comprehensibility
8. high degree of potential user appeal
9. high artistic quality and/or literary style
10. quality format
11. value commensurate with cost and/or need

QUESTIONED PRINT AND NON-PRINT MATERIALS

Questioned materials should be reviewed objectively, unemotionally and as a routine matter. The criticism of a questionable piece of print or non-print materials must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, must be signed, and must include specific information as to the author, title, publisher, and definite citation of objection.

A review committee will be appointed by the Superintendent to determine the validity of the objection. Appeals from the decision of the committee may be made through the Superintendent for final decision.

(based on procedures outlined in **Policies and Procedures for Selection of School Library Materials, American Association of School Librarians, 1971**)

SAMPLE POLICY NO. 2

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS–UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Media Center Materials Selection Policy

GOALS

A goal of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, as stated in its philosophy of Education, is to establish a plan of educational development which will produce in its students an awareness of responsibility and responsiveness to others; a knowledge of the skills of inquiry, analysis, and problem-solving both individually and in group situations; and an ability to communicate and cooperate with others from a diversity of cultural backgrounds.

Another goal of the school district is to recognize the importance of the freedom to read as established by the first amendment. The students' right to read is a major student right and should influence the selection of materials for media center collections.

The school media centers have an important role in implementing the goals of the school system. The guidelines they have established for themselves are found in the **School Library Bill of Rights** (Approved by the Council Association of School Librarians endorsed by the Council of the American Library Association, July, 1955).

1. To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the pupils served.

2. To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

3. To provide a background of information which will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.

4. To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

5. To provide materials representative of many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contribution to our American heritage.

6. To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive selection appropriate for the users of the library.

SELECTION PERSONNEL

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education is the legal body in which rests the ultimate responsibility for the selection of materials for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Media Centers. The responsibility for the actual selection of materials for the school media center shall be delegated to the professional librarian of each school, who will choose the materials best suited to the needs of each school based on the goals of the school system and the curriculum.

The personnel who assist in the actual selection of materials for the media centers must include the professional librarians, and may include other media specialists, curriculum consultants, teaching staff, administrators, other staff, students, and parents.

CRITERIA USED IN MATERIALS SELECTION

Selection of materials for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School District Media Centers is a continuous, year-long process, based on the needs of a constantly changing and evolving curriculum, and on the extremely diverse interests of students and teachers. It is the policy of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District to select materials for our libraries according to the following guidelines.

1. Basic materials are chosen which help to develop literary and artistic appreciation in young readers. Media which treats social and human problems are selected for all levels of readers' understanding.

2. Fiction is evaluated on the basis of the following criteria: true representation of the aspect of life chosen by the author to describe; effectiveness in sustaining the reader's interest; a plausible plot; structural soundness and clarity of style; and vitality and consistency in characterization.

3. Non-fiction is chosen in consideration of these elements: concern with subjects of significance; accuracy; sufficient scope; presentation of an informative point of view; current interest or relevance; an acceptable format; and effectiveness in presentation.

4. Films, recordings, filmstrips, and other non-print materials are selected for artistic and technical quality and for the value of the content for individual and group appreciation and discussion. Materials are included which are representative of current trends in technique.

5. Materials are purchased which are of value to individuals with limited reading ability or limited vision. ANY medium of format is considered, if it helps to inform or to improve communication. *

6. Literary excellence alone may be the sole criterion for selection of some materials.

7. The goals and guidelines previously defined in this policy statement will be implemented in the selection of media center materials.

SELECTION OF CONTROVERSIAL MATERIALS

Materials on controversial topics as well as materials containing controversial language, may be included in Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District Media Centers if they are recommended in the professional and commercial reviewing journals, if they meet the evaluative criteria listed above in this policy, if they are relevant to the curriculum and are consistent with the Philosophy of Education of our school district.

POLICY RELATING TO SPECIAL AREAS

1. **Professional Book Collections**
   Each library shall select appropriate materials for teacher use, and professional growth. These materials would generally not be for pupil use nor aimed at recreational interests.

2. **Paperback Books and Ephemeral Materials**
   Media centers include paperback books to supply extra copies of popular titles and to add variety to the collection. Cataloging procedures for these paper-back titles may vary from formal cataloging to simplified or none at all at the discretion of the professional librarian. Ephemeral materials including items such as timely pamphlet materials may be included at the discretion of the librarian. (These are not catalogued.)

3. **Expensive Materials**
   Unusually expensive material may occasionally be purchased for the media centers if the item meets the criteria for selection better than other less expensive material or fills a definite curriculum need.

* Items 1-5 are taken from the Cuyahoga County Public Library Materials Selection Policy, adopted November, 1968.

4. **Gifts**
The School Libraries accept gifts with the privilege of including, at their discretion, those materials which meet their needs. The Librarian shall decide which gifts will be kept, catalogued and/or added to the collection. Such materials will be judged by the evaluative criteria of selection used for purchased materials as described in the section on Criteria. Gifts of money, including memorial gifts for the purchase of materials, are accepted.

5. **Sponsored Materials**
For sponsored material (instructional items for use in public schools provided by private concerns or commercial organizations) the same selection criteria shall be applied as for all other material. It will not be chosen if it attempts to establish the exclusiveness of a particular product or service.

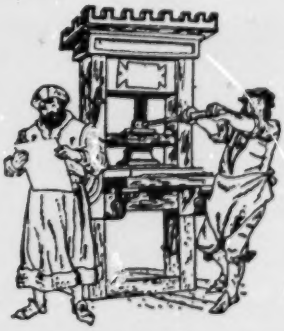
6. **Weeding**
Weeding the media center collections by withdrawing and discarding materials is as important in maintaining a useful and useable collection as is the careful selection of new materials. Print and non-print materials which are in poor physical condition, which contain outmoded or obsolete subject content, or which are of doubtful literary quality are all candidates for removal from the collection. Weeding should be a continuous process.

7. **Selection of Jobbers or Publishers**
The Library Headquarters of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District will select jobbers or publishers who can give prompt, reliable service.

8. **Challenged Materials**
There shall be a procedure by which citizens, staff, or pupils may challenge materials. Such a procedure shall include a review of the challenged material.

* * * *

Adopted by Board of Education December 17, 1973.



SAMPLE CITIZEN'S REVIEW FORM NO. 1

CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS

To be valid, all questions must be answered

Type of material: Book__Hardcover__ Paperback__Film__Filmstrip__Pamphlet__Tape__
Other_____

Author _____

Have you read any other books by this author? _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Date of Publication _____

Request initiated by _____

Address: _____ City _____ State__Zip____Telephone_____

Do you have a child in the school concerned? _____

Complainant represents: _____ Himself

_____(Name of organization)

_____(Identify other group)

(If objection is to material other than a book, change wording of the following questions so that they apply.)

To what in the book do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages, words, and nature of contents). _____

What pages did you find especially offending or in bad taste? _____

Why do you object to this material? _____

Why do you feel this book is inappropriate for the school library? _____

What do you feel might be the result of reading this book? _____

For what age would you recommend this book? _____

Is there anything good about the book? _____

Did you read entire book? _____ What parts? _____

Are you aware of the judgment of this book by literary critics? _____

What do literary critics say about this book? _____

How did you become aware of this book? _____

Are you acquainted with the range of materials being used in the school system on this general topic? _____

Do you approve of presenting a diversity of points of view in the classroom? _____

What do you believe is the theme of this book? _____

What is the author's main idea in this book? _____

Do you feel this book does not depict the actual way of life we see everyday? _____

And if not, then, what is the difference? _____

What do you feel would be the appropriate way to handle this situation? _____

_____

What would you like your library/school to do about this book?

Do not assign it to my child _____
Do not lend it to my child _____
Withdraw it from all readers/students as well as my child _____
Send it back to the staff selection official/English department office for re-evaluation _____

In its place, what book of equal quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject treated? _____

_____

Signature of Complainant _____

SAMPLE CITIZEN'S REVIEW FORM NO. 2

CHALLENGED OR QUESTIONED MATERIALS

Criticisms of books that are in the library should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent. The Board of Education will be informed. Allegations thus submitted will be considered by a committee consisting of the district librarians and one faculty member of the school involved. The challenged book or material will be judged by the committee as to its conformity to the aforementioned principles. The books or materials involved will be suspended pending a decision in writing from the committee. Appeals may be made through the Superintendent to the Board of Education for final decision.

CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A BOOK

Author _____ Hardcover __Paperback _____

Title _____

Publisher _____

Request initiated by _____

Telephone _____ Address _____

City _____ Zone _____

Complaint represents:

_____ Himself _____

_____ Name organization _____

_____ Identify other group _____

1. To what in the book do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages)_____

_____

2. What do you feel might be the result of reading this book? _____

_____

3. For what age group would you recommend this book? _____

4. Is there anything good about this book? _____

5. Did you read the entire book? _____ What parts? _____

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this book by literary critics? _____

7. What do you believe is the theme of this book? _____

_____

8. What would you like your school to do about this book?
_____ Do not assign it to my child
_____ Withdraw it from all students as well as from my child
_____ Send it back to the Librarian for re-evaluation

9. In its place, what book of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization?

Author: _____ Title: _____

Date _____

_____
Signature of Complainant

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PICTORIAL CREDITS

"The Right to Know," can be found in **Norman Rockwell: A Sixty Year Retrospective.** Written by Thomas S. Buechner. Abrams Inc., 1972. page 145.

"Freedom of Speech," can be found in **Norman Rockwell Illustrator,** written by Arthur Guptill. Warson Guptill Pub., Inc. 1946. page 143.

William Tyndale can be found in **6000 Years of the Bible,** by G. S. Wegener. Harper and Row, 1958. page 227.

James Madison found in **The First Amendment and the News Media,** prepared by the Annual Warren Conference on Advocacy in the United States. June 8-9, 1973. The Roscoe Pound American Trial Lawyers Foundation, 1973, on title page verso.

"The Liberty of the Press: Do not Meddle with it " can be found in **Freedom of the Press and L'Association Mensuelle,** by Edwin De. T. Bechtel. Grolier Club, 1952. plate XX.

"A Writer, Is He?" can be found in **George Grosz: Art and Politics in the Weimar Republic,** written by Beth Lewis. University of Wiscensin Press, 1971. page 209.

This publication was prepared by the Intellectual Freedom Committee
of Ohio Association of School Librarians

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